AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (original) A safety syringe assembly, comprising:

an elongated, generally cylindrical barrel having a hollow interior forming a hollow nozzle located at a distal end of said barrel and opening into the interior of said barrel and an expanded proximal segment;

a plunger slidably mounted in said barrel and having a longitudinal open channel;

a needle;

a needle holder mounting said needle at a distal end thereof and slidably mounted in said longitudinal open channel of said plunger for movement between an advanced position in which said needle on the distal end of said needle holder projects from a distal end of said nozzle, and a retracted position in which said needle is retracted within said barrel;

a compression spring mounted inside of said barrel, and a spring retainer element located in said expanded proximal segment of said barrel and having a stabilizing surface extending along and about a portion of the internal wall of said barrel, and a spring support portion extending from said stabilizing surface interiorly of said barrel and supporting a distal end portion of said spring against expansion, said spring retainer also having a through opening for freely receiving said needle holder therethrough; said spring urging said needle holder toward its retracted position; and

a latch having an engaged position in which said needle holder is latched relative to said barrel to hold said needle holder in its advanced position against the urging of said spring, and a disengaged position in which said needle holder is unlatched relative to said barrel to allow said spring to expand in a proximal direction to move said needle holder to its retracted position.

2. (original) The syringe assembly of claim 1 wherein said latch is inseparably mounted to said barrel.

3. (original) The syringe assembly of claim 1 wherein said spring is a helical spring disposed around said needle and said needle holder.

4. (original) The syringe assembly of claim 1 wherein said latch is mounted so as to be activated by advance of said plunger.

5. (original) The syringe assembly of claim 1 wherein said latch is mounted on an external surface of the barrel.

6. (original) The syringe assembly of claim 1 wherein said barrel includes a track slot and wherein said needle holder includes a lateral arm extending laterally from said plunger open channel into said track slot, whereby said needle holder is guided by said track slot as it moves toward its retracted position.

7. (original) The syringe assembly of claim 6 wherein said latch is mounted for movement into and out of registry with a distal end of said track slot for capturing and releasing said lateral arm at the distal end of said track slot.

8-132. (canceled)